

ASPIRA, INC. OF NEW JERSEY  
BOARD RETREAT  
July 12-14, 1991

MINUTES

Attendance:

Present

Absent

Carlos Alma  
Dennis Alvarado  
Gene Calderon  
Elvin Crespo  
Samuel Delgado  
Evelyn Seda Lequerica  
Walter Oliveras  
Margaret Rosario-Rivera  
Delia Sosa  
Noemi Velazquez  
Elsa Nunez-Wormack

Maria Colon  
Agustin Cruz  
Louise Lester  
Martin Martinez

Dr. Christen Wenzel, Retreat Facilitator

ASPIRA Staff: Hilda Rosario, Executive Director  
Itala M. Mansilla, Director of Development

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Friday, July 12, 1991  
Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m.

1. Waiver of Notice

Every Board Member indicated that they were duly notified of the meeting.

2. Panel Discussion: History & Mission of ASPIRA

Panelists: Jose Matos - Chairperson of ASPIRA of Illinois  
Phillip Rivera - Former Chairperson of ASPIRA of New York

Elsa Nunez-Wormack introduced the panelists for the panel discussion. The panelists were asked to give an overview of the history and mission ASPIRA as a National organization and as a local organization.

a. Jose Matos gave an overview of how he learned about ASPIRA in his school days and his professional involvement with ASPIRA. He began as a counselor then became a program director, and now he is Chair of ASPIRA of Illinois and member of ASPIRA National.

b. Phillip Rivera presented a historical overview on the inception of ASPIRA of New York. He stated that the reason ASPIRA of NY was created in 1962 was to deal with the issue of Puerto Rican kids having a difficult time in school. The founder of ASPIRA of New York is Dr. Antonia Pantoja. As a result of the creation of ASPIRA of New York, four other ASPIRA Associates were formed in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Illinois, and Puerto Rico were created in 1968. At the same time, ASPIRA National was created in an effort to make an impact at the national level and to receive funds only available to national organizations.

c. Jose Matos provided the Board with an overview of the history of ASPIRA of Illinois.

After this segment of the presentation the Board adjourned for the reception and Dinner. During dinner, the Board was to discuss and find the answers to the following questions:

1. Who founded ASPIRA of New Jersey and under what conditions?
2. How is an ASPIRA created today?
3. What is the relationship between ASPIRA National and ASPIRA of New Jersey?
4. Why is Leadership Development the core of ASPIRA's mission and why is it such a political issue with some of our funding sources particularly foundations?
5. What is the ASPIRA Process?

After dinner the Board met again to discuss the issues of ethnicity in the ASPIRA Boards, in particular the Board of ASPIRA of New Jersey.

d. Before commencing the discussion on ethnicity, Phillip Rivera shared with the Board some development strategies that he has developed throughout his years of work and dedication to ASPIRA and the educational system.

- a. Dealing with change and staying basic
- b. Choosing the critical constituency
- c. Self-sufficiency
- d. Parents

e. Jose Matos discussed the issue of ethnicity in the Chicago Board and how they have dealt with the issue of having an all Puerto Rican Board. He went on to explain that for the first time in the history of ASPIRA of Chicago, they have a non-Puerto Rican as a member of the Board. The rationale behind this strategy is to develop a vehicle to increase their fund-raising efforts. ASPIRA of Chicago is undergoing a three year development campaign, as part of that campaign they felt it was important to target and pinpoint key funding sources. They decided to incorporate into the Board someone with a strong development foundation and network. On their search for that person, they came across the best suited candidate for them - who happens to be a non-Puerto Rican. The Board had to decide if this was acceptable due to the conditions surrounding the decision. The Board decided to place this member on Board for a period of three years. The person on their Development Team is fully aware that the Board is made up of

Puerto Ricans and fully understands and is committed to the mission of ASPIRA of Chicago.

e. Phillip Rivera discussed the issue of ethnicity in the Board of NY. The way the NY Board decided to deal with cultural diversity was to incorporate a Board of Trustees comprised of various ethnic backgrounds. In this manner, they would have accessibility to diversity while the Board remained totally Puerto Rican.

Elsa Nunez-Wormack opened the floor for discussion of the issue of ethnicity in the NJ Board. Question for discussion: Should the Board of ASPIRA of NJ remain all Puerto Rican?

The Board Members stated their positions.

The direction of the Board is to remain Puerto Rican.

Elvin Crespo expressed his concern regarding the financial commitment by the Board members and the enforcement of the By-Laws of the such. He stated that there should be a procedure to be followed to keep track of all Board member contributions.

A result of the financial commitment discussion a motion was passed by Elvin Crespo that states that, "as per the By-Laws any Board Member who does not satisfy their financial contributions is consideration for dismissal from the Board. Elsa Nunez-Wormack seconded the motion. All in favor: 10 Abstentions: 1 Motion carried.

The following were the recommendations made by Dr. Wenzel regarding the ethnic make-up of the Board:

- a. The Finance Sub-Committee should re-visit the Boards' nomination process. The Finance Committee should conduct a systematic study and come up with recommendations a year from now. The Finance Sub-committee should serve as watch dog during this fiscal year. The Sub-Committee structure should present recommendations for Board Retreat agenda.
- b. The issue of ethnicity should be re-visited each year for now.
- c. No seeming expected changes for bringing non-Puerto Rican on Board at this time.
- d. The two basic criteria discussed for a board member were commitment to ASPIRA and the Latino community and financial commitment as a Board member.
- e. The Board should re-visit the By-Laws.
- f. The sense of the group was that the Board should adhere more faithfully to the criteria for continued membership.
- g. The fact that the Board is purely Puerto Rican demonstrates leadership development.

8. Dr. Wenzel suggests that the Finance Committee interviews prospective Board members and recommends candidates.

SATURDAY, JULY 13, 1991

1. Executive Director's Report

Hilda Rosario stated that the Executive Director's Report is composed of two major parts: Programs and Development.

The Programs presentation is composed of three parts, the first being presented by Wanda De Jesus, Regional Programs Director, on the Implementation of the ASPIRA Process. The second component presented by Roberto Del Rios, Regional Programs Director, who will describe the students who participated in the ASPIRA Process this year. The third component to be presented is data on each of the schools we service and the drop-out rates among the schools.

Margie Rivera-Rosario stated her concern regarding the number of males in the caseload and participating in the clubs. She asked if there had been discussions among staff to address this issue. Roberto Del Rios replied that there have been staff development meetings to address this particular issue and how to increase the participation of the male students.

Noemi Velazquez stated that her experience as a teacher has helped to see that male students have difficulty in getting involved in extra-curricular activities. She suggested that the staff brainstorm on creative ideas on how to motivate these young men to get involved in the ASPIRA clubs.

Hilda Rosario stated that throughout her presentation please keep in mind the issue of gender and ethnicity. The questions to ask is how are we going to increase the number of males and how are we going to increase the ratio of Puerto Rican students?

Hilda Rosario presented the drop-out rates of the schools that ASPIRA service.

As a result of the data presented on each school the following issues were presented for discussion and for resolutions to be made:

- a. That ASPIRA move from Trenton School #2 to Trenton School #4.
  - b. ASPIRA move from Central High in Newark and increase staff at Broadway Middle School.
  - c. Discussion of what decision to make regarding Eastside High School in Paterson
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- a. Regarding the relocation of ASPIRA from Trenton School #2 to #4 Wanda De Jesus stated that there is a greater need for ASPIRA at Trenton School #4 due to the larger Puerto Rican population.

Gene Calderon asked how this transition would affect the students of school #2. Wanda De Jesus suggested that the process be a slow one, in which the counselor(s) work one or two days in one school and the remainder of the days in another school.

Elsa presented a resolution for the Trenton School District relocation from school #2 to school #4 as follows: FY 91-92 ASPIRA will operate from both schools and the time will be divided 40-60% as deemed appropriate and necessary.

Walter Oliveras seconded the motion.

All in favor. Motion carried.

b. Central High School

Hilda explained that the student population is predominantly non-Hispanic. This is our second year at the school and we do have a good working relationship with the school administrators and teachers. However, the number of students that we are servicing are predominantly African Americans. This is due to the fact that there are few Hispanic students enrolled at Central High School.

Hilda Rosario recommends that we increase staff at Broadway Middle School.

Margie Rivera-Rosario made a motion to recommend that ASPIRA move out of Central High School and transfer to Broadway Middle School. Walter Oliveras seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

c. The question was raised: Should ASPIRA move out of Eastside High School in Paterson to Passaic High School in Passaic? Eastside High School is predominantly Dominican.

What would be the impact of this move on the community?

Hilda stated that the response would not be positive due to the involvement of the personnel and the teachers.

Issues resulting from data presented regarding Eastside High School

- More data is needed regarding Eastside High School
- Is there another school in Paterson that may have a high percentage of Puerto Ricans?
- What would be the effects in terms of funding as it relates to John F. Kennedy?

Carlos Alma made a motion to investigate any other school in Paterson where there is a high percentage of Puerto Ricans and a report should be given to the Programs Committee by October. Elvin Crespo seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Elsa stated that more data is needed and more research is needed to be conducted in order to make a decision whether to leave Eastside H.S. Hilda Rosario will follow-up on findings at a later Board Meeting. Programs Committee will be responsible for obtaining this information.

## Development Office Report

Itala Mansilla provided an overview of the procedures and functions of the Development Office.

Elvin Crespo requested that the development office develop an informational packet to be presented to prospective donors.

Dr. Wenzel stated that ultimately it is the responsibility of the Board to guide the Development Office in terms of fund-raising initiatives and prospective donors. She stressed that we should not loose sight of that.

### 2. Three Year Plan Presentation

This component of the agenda was presented by Margie Rivera-Rosario.

After review of the three year plan document Walter Oliveras moved to accept the three year plan with revisions. Evelyn Seda Lequerica seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

### 3. The Role of the Board: Planning, Implementing and Funding of the Three Year Plan

What is expected from the Board? What is in the By-Laws?

1. Financial Commitment
2. Advocacy

Walter Oliveras asked how do we as Board Members do our work; For example, How do committee members get information from staff and not overstep boundaries?

Elsa Nunez-Wormack stated that Board members should not go directly to staff.

What is the role of the Board in implementing a Three Year Plan?

- Fundraising
- The Board aids the development office in identifying and nurturing prospective donors.

Dr. Wenzel stated that the issue of Matching Gifts should be an agenda item in a future board meeting.

Elsa Nunez-Wormack stated the possibility of having a Board workshop on fund-raising.

The Board should be developing an in-house strategic fund-raising plan and working closely with the Executive Director and the Development Office.

### 4. The Role of the Executive Director

The issue of process was raised.

There is no performance evaluation form available for the Executive Staff. This document will be presented by Elvin on Sunday.

The Chairperson monitors and communicates with Hilda regarding issues throughout the year.

The Executive Director is responsible for the flow of information from the Board to the committees to the staff. It is important that the Executive Director be available to all committee chairs.

The Chairperson of the Board should be aware of what is being requested from the Executive Director.

Question posed: Does the Executive Director have to be present at all sub-committee meetings?

Committee Chairs' response: Walter - no  
Evelyn - no  
Elvin - flexible

Dr. Wenzel suggested that when committee meetings are held the Executive Director should be notified. She stated that the committee structure will be in place for one year.

The Executive Committee is to meet at least 3 or 4 times a year or scheduled as needed.

Attending Advocacy Meetings:

- The Executive Director serves as a liaison between other agencies and ASPIRA. This will provide visibility to the agency.
- The Executive Director is the spokesperson for ASPIRA.
- The Executive Director is asked to not take a position on a controversial issue until it is discussed with the chairperson of the Board.

Hilda Rosario stated that the Board should give more direction on issues. For example, what is a priority and what is of urgency?

Issues to be discussed in the Fall by the Board:

1. Bilingual Education
2. Takeover of Paterson School System
3. Teen-Pregnancy

SUNDAY, JULY 14, 1991

#### 1. Capital Campaign Committee Report

Elsa Nunez-Wormack reported that we are into the second year of the three year campaign.

The Development Committee agreed to raise \$20,000 yearly for 1991, 1992 and 1993 for the capital campaign. (See document distributed by Elsa.)

Elsa Nunez-Wormack reviewed the status of the purchase of the building.

Elsa Nunez-Wormack stated that the Board is responsible to fund-raise \$400,000 over a 5 year period beginning in September 1991. (See letter to Elsa from Lowenstein.)

Elsa Nunez-Wormack stated that we need to raise \$36,000 by September 30th. She suggested that the Jazz Concert fund-raiser be allocated towards the capital campaign to meet the \$36,000 requirement.

The Finance Committee is responsible for making sure that all appropriate repairs be done for FY 91-92.

Elsa Nunez-Wormack stated that the two major issues on the table for discussion are:

- the \$36,000 - Development Committee
- Repairs needed - Finance Committee

Elvin Crespo asked about the status of the funds that are pending. Elsa Nunez-Wormack responded that we have obtained some commitments, problem is that monies are being given to us over time.

Elvin Crespo suggested that an installment plan be worked out with contractors. Samuel Delgado stated that he may have a contact with a fencing company and a security company who may give us lower quotes.

Elsa Nunez-Wormack suggested that Samuel Delgado sit on the Finance Committee with Elvin Crespo to work together on this problem.

Elsa Nunez-Wormack stated that Martin Martinez will spearhead the strategic development plan to raise funds from pharmaceutical companies.

Elsa Nunez-Wormack also stated that Ed Lenihan suggested that if by the end of the five years ASPIRA can't come up with the \$500,000 dollars they should sell the building.

## 2. Programs Committee Report

Walter Oliveras provided an overview of the ASPIRA Student Congress of NJ.

Reason for development of the Student Congress: there was no student representatives under the age of 18.

Walter Oliveras reviewed the charts distributed and the structure of the Student Congress

Dr. Wenzel recommended the following:

- a. That the goal of the Student Congress should be to adapt a new structure to have student input at the Board level.
- b. Consider the financial implications of having more staff time allocated to bringing students together.
- c. That voting on the document should be stipulated pending budget approval.
- d. The students should be given an orientation prior to Board participation.

Walter Oliveras reviewed each article of the document with the Board and the suggestions were given on the document.

Elsa Nunez-Wormack recommends that this document be adapted with the stipulation that the Finance Committee conducts a cost-analysis study; the students should review and discuss the document; and the Board should vote on this document with the stipulation that the document can be changed at any Board meeting.

Dr. Wenzel recommended that the Board accept the document presented today as a working document. A revised document will be presented at the next retreat with recommendations from the students and staff.

Elsa Nunez-Wormack made a friendly amendment that a motion be carried that at the 1991 retreat the document be revised and finalized as per board approval.

Gene Calderon made a motion that the document presented to be a working document as stated by Dr. Wenzel. Margie Rivera-Rosario seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Noemi Velazquez suggested that the wording should be less technical or sophisticated for the students to understand.

Elsa Nunez-Wormack acknowledged Walter Oliveras on behalf of the Board for his work on this document.

Walter Oliveras thanked Agustin Cruz for his input stating that he was responsible for most of the document.

### 3. Development Committee Report

Margie Rivera-Rosario provided overview of Development Committee responsibilities.

Key issues of discussion:

- a. ASPIRA should try to develop self-sufficiency.
- b. It is essential to be creative and have focus.
- c. Nurturing of old sources for added revenue is needed.
- d. The nurturing of new funders is also part of the strategy.
- e. Individual giving has to increase.

Evelyn Seda-Lequerica provided an overview of the Latin Jazz Concert.

### 4. Finance Committee Report

Elvin Crespo presented the report.

1. Presented a draft of the evaluation form for the Executive Director. Executive Director fills out the form as each section relates to the goals and objectives of the year. Elvin Crespo asked the Board members to submit other samples of evaluation forms.

Elvin Crespo will identify strengths and weaknesses. The Executive Director will meet with the Vice-Chair of Finance to determine the goals and objectives for the year.

A document will be presented to the Board in October to create an Executive Director's evaluation form.

Hilda Rosario will also have input.

#### 6. Old Business

Carlos Alma asked who will be attending the Puerto Rican Day Parade. Thus far, 3 Board members will be attending.

There will be a Development Committee meeting on July 20, 1991 at 10:00 a.m.

#### 7. New Business

Elvin Crespo and Gene Calderon are to have a marketing plan for the Jazz Concert by July 20th, 1991.

Schedule of Board Meetings throughout the year. The meetings will continue to be the third Tuesday of every month at 6pm.

Date	Location
September	Newark
October <i>21st Nth</i>	Trenton <del>██████████</del>
November <i>2nd 13th</i>	Camden <del>██████████</del>
December <i>3rd 13th</i>	Jersey City
January	Newark
February	Newark
March	Newark
April	Trenton
May	Trenton

Carlos Alma moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:00 noon. Seconded by Evelyn Seda Lequerica.